

IN MEMORY

of

Sarah Rutledge Saunders



Reprinted from the
Lompoc Review, Lompoc, Cal.

IN MEMORY OF

Sarah Rutledge Saunders

The death of Mrs. Sarah Rutledge Saunders Monday, and the impressive funeral held from the Presbyterian Church Wednesday afternoon, attracted more than passing interest of the many who knew her during her long and useful life, and of the thousands who knew of her as the little sister of Abraham Lincoln's first sweetheart, Ann Rutledge, who died but three weeks before the day they were to have been married, and who left her impress upon the life of one of America's greatest.

"Aunt Sallie", as Mrs. Saunders was universally known, was born at New Salem, Ill., October 20, 1829; was married 1852 in Iowa; moved to Missouri in 1865, just as the Civil War was coming to a close; moved to Lompoc in 1881, where she has made her home since. But two of several children survive her, Dr. H. C. Saunders, of Santa Barbara, and J. R. Saunders, of Siquoc, with whom Aunt Sallie made her home after the death of her husband in 1905, until two years ago when she fell and broke a hip. She has been in the care of Mrs. Susie Van Clief for these two years, here in Lompoc.

In addition to her own personal charm of character, Aunt Sallie held the distinction of being the last surviving member of the Rutledge family in whose home the great President, Abraham Lincoln, came as a young man to board, while working in the village store at New Salem. Here he met, loved and won the elder sister, Ann, who is conceded by historians to have been the one great love of the martyred President's life. Here in the evenings Lincoln entertained the family of his beloved with his dry humor and ready wit; here he and Ann stud-

ied together grammar and spelling in preparation for the later incidents of the great man's life.

Many of these incidents were remembered by Aunt Sallie, who enjoyed to relate them to her friends, many of whom called upon her almost daily during the last two years of her life in the community, when she was compelled by her broken limb to give up the active life to which she had been accustomed, having kept house in most approved style until the accident that rendered her helpless. Though confined to her bed for the past two years Aunt Sallie carried her years lightly, being almost 93 years at her death, carrying on most cheerfully toward the setting sun of life.

Many historians and writers have journeyed to her door from far parts of the country to hear from her lips tales of the famous President, Lincoln, and treasured more highly than most any of her other possessions were a little daguerrotype sent by the President to Aunt Sallie's brother, Robert Rutledge, during the first year of the donor's life in the White House; and a quilt made from the clothing Lincoln wore while living with the Rutledge family; and many other little treasures owned or handled by this famous man of American history.

Aunt Sallie was a great housewife, being especially proficient at spinning and weaving and other housewifely tasks of another generation. One of her chief sorrows during her enforced rest of the last two years of her life was the fact she was not able to be with her son in their little home in the nearby oilfields. She was a devout Christian, a member from childhood days of the Presbyterian Church, and a member of the local church of that organization. Her passing has brought real grief to those of her intimates, who knew her for the sweet character she was.

